

Can Constructive Dialogue Alone Solve Zambia's Problems?

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Abstract: *This paper examines the donor/partnership relationships of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID/Zambia) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Zambia with local non-governmental organisations - the Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP) and the Southern Africa Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) respectively on how the Western entities use public diplomacy and smart power as vehicles to alleviate electoral violence; the paper looks at what dialoguing efforts have been made by Zambian political parties and other actors in the period 2011 to 2016 to minimise political violence. The study was a case study of FODEP and SACCORD members. Primary data was gathered using semi-structured questionnaires; interviews with staff at the local NGOs and with USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia employees were done. Secondary research was also conducted; the data was analysed using triangulation method. The findings are that Zambia's democratic credibility in Africa is regressing due to conflicting political parties inability to dialogue over differences; and that USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia, FODEP and SACCORD need to increase their efforts to eradicate electoral violence by sponsoring and carrying out more effective communications programs targeting poor, uneducated male-youths from shanty compounds.*

Keywords: Zambia, political dialogue, solutions, electoral violence, public diplomacy

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Introduction

When the head of the Zambian state, Edgar Chagwa Lungu, went on record admitting that it will be difficult to end political violence,¹ many stakeholders agreed that there was a problem with political violence in the country – and that the efforts to eradicate it should be prioritised. Zambia is generally considered a peaceful nation, but this is changing particularly during the periods when by-elections and general elections are held — a phenomenon that has become more pronounced since 2011.

This article examines the donor / partnership relationships of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID/Zambia) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Zambia with local non-governmental organisations - the Foundation for Democratic Process (FODEP) and the Southern Africa Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) respectively - on how Western entities use public diplomacy and smart power as vehicles to alleviate electoral violence problems. In short, the utilization of USAID/Zambia's and FES Zambia's communication influence and financial strategies to curb electoral violence through sponsored programs was investigated. This paper also looks at what dialoguing efforts have been made by Zambian political parties and other actors in the period 2011 to 2016 to find solutions to minimise political violence. The area of research belongs to the history of public diplomacy and democratization processes. This field of study is interesting because amongst

¹ Fridah Nkonde, "It won't be easy to stop violence – Lungu", *The Post*, 31st March 2016, available at <http://www.postzambia.com/news.php?id=16939>, accessed on 31st March 2016 (accessed through Facebook).

other reasons it promotes peace-building through many avenues including states engaging communication strategies in foreign countries.

Electoral violence

Electoral violence actors are mostly impoverished, unemployed, and uneducated male youth cadres from shanty compounds in the Lusaka and Copperbelt provinces. They are transported from markets, streets and impoverished settlements to election areas in Zambia and paid paltry amounts of money to intimidate, harass, beat, injure, destroy private and public property and sometimes kill electorates. Political violence is not new in Zambia; however, with each president that the country elects into power, the frequency and the intensity of the level of violence increases. The five past presidents occasionally spoke against it but did not implement effective mechanisms to minimise or end it. The sixth president of Zambia, Edgar Chagwa Lungu, is also experiencing electoral violence in his tenure of office and has often spoken against it. Clearly, rhetoric is not enough, other stringent measures need to be put in place. Electoral violence nowadays is a controversy that is often associated with two political parties – the ruling Patriotic Front (PF) and the opposition United Party for National Development (UPND), with each blaming the other for its instigation.

Zambia is the second largest producer of copper in Africa but this fact has not rescued the nation from abject poverty. A World Bank report claims that Zambia's economic growth has not translated into significant poverty reduction:

Sixty percent of the population lives below the poverty line and 42% are considered to be in extreme poverty. Moreover, the absolute number of poor has increased from about six million in 1991 to 7.9 million in 2010, primarily due to population growth.²

The poverty and social inequality that exists in Zambia provides an arena for opportunistic politicians to exploit poor youth into violent acts.³ Think Africa Press writes:

...the average “youth” member actually ranges between 20 and 35 years of age. They are believed to be recruited from Zambia’s large unemployment, urban, male population by the provincial chairmen of the parties, and paid around 25 Zambian Kwacha (approximately \$5) for a day of activism. Cadres are usually provided with free beer and are sometimes armed with panga machetes. Some cadres are even known to switch parties from day-to-day, depending on who is hiring.⁴

Kapika reports that the instigators of violence, whom he identifies as Zambian politicians and party officials perceive violence:

as both an offensive weapon and as a component of personal security – as a necessary part of any political campaign, and elections too are connected to how much money you have put into your ability to intimidate others. And some politicians argue that they must maintain some capacity to unleash violence

² ***, “Zambia Overview”, *The World Bank*, 2016, available at <http://worldbank.org/en/country/zambia/overview>, accessed on 31 March 2016.

³ Hope Nyambe, “A dissection of political violence in Zambia”, *Zambian Eye*, 3 October 2013, available at <http://www.zambianeye.com/a-dissection-of-political-violence-in-zambia>, accessed on 24 March 2016.

⁴ ***, “Zambia – threat of political violence from youth groups”, *Africa Sustainable Conservation News*, 30 November 2012, available at <https://africasustainableconservation.com/tag/zambia-political-violence>, accessed on 25 March 2016.

*as a measure of self-defence. And too it is not possible to have a campaign without your boys. If you are around, they too must be around.*⁵

Some members of the international community have made efforts to denounce the escalating levels of violence in Zambia. The European Union head of delegation, Alessandro Mariani, and the heads of mission of EU member states called in March 2016 on law enforcement agencies to bring perpetrators of violence to book. A joint statement communicated that:

*The EU delegation and heads of mission of EU member states are deeply concerned by the recent incidents of politically motivated violence in Zambia. (...) The absence of violence is required to guarantee the Zambian people their democratic rights to free, fair and peaceful elections. Moreover, preventing such incidences will strengthen Zambia's international reputation as a peaceful, stable and tolerant country and its stance as a destination of choice for foreign investments and tourism.*⁶

Within the African continent, the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) is a body that has been vocal in advising Zambians to desist from electoral violence and the Union has spoken out against human rights violations in Zambia.⁷ Many sectors of Zambian society, apart from advocacy NGOs, have reacted and strongly condemned electoral violence in the nation. These include traditional chiefs, the Law Association of Zambia

⁵ Brown Kapika, "Zambia: Zambia political violence and the hell of political cadres", *Lusakatimes.com*, 17 March 2016, available at <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2016/03/17/zambia-political-violence-hell-political-cadres>, accessed on 16 September 2016.

⁶ ***, "EU delegation in Zambia deeply concerned by incidents of political violence", *Lusakatimes.com*, 16 March 2016, available at <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2016/03/eu-delegation-zambia-deeply-concerned>, accessed on 18 March 2016.

⁷ ***, "Numsa urges Zambian voters to 'resist the slide into violence'", *Times Live*, 10 August 2016, available at <https://www.timeslive.co.za/africa/2016/08/10/Numsa-Zambian-voters-to>, accessed on 20 March 2017.

(LAZ), women's organizations, church bodies, renowned scholars and citizens.

FES Zambia's role in the period 2011 to 2016 has been concerned with trade union capacity building; media and politics; producing state of the media reports; promoting the oversight role of the National Assembly; assisting in the understanding of constitutionalism and citizen participation; strengthening political parties; promoting the role of women in decision making and politics; promoting issue-based campaigns; as well as promoting conflict resolution and peaceful elections. The Foundation in Zambia momentarily generally concentrates on political governance.⁸ USAID Zambia's functions deals with health, agriculture, climate change and improving environmental management, education, promoting civil society, governance, and human rights. Of these areas, health receives the largest chunk – 85 % of funding.⁹

Hypothesis and Research Questions

The central hypothesis of this study argues that past and present Public Diplomacy (PD) and Smart Power (SP) strategies utilized by USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia in relation to their funding / patterning of democratic and good governance programs with local Zambian NGOs – FODEP and SACCORD – gave insufficient priority or none at all to

⁸ Helmut Elischer, Resident Director, Friedrich Erbert Stiftung Zambia. Email to author, 29 August 2016, Personal communication.

⁹ Janet Deutsch, Public Affairs Officer, United States Agency for International Development Zambia. Email to author, 20 October 2016, personal communication.

sponsoring non-violent activities, civic and voter programs; and that program funding priorities require re-strategizing and re-focusing on educating citizens on refraining from violent behaviour at election periods. It also argues that there is a growing need and urgency for specially tailored messages and programs that require formulation by NGOs for the purpose of targeting instigators and actors of electoral violence in Zambia.

The following research questions informed this study:

1. What are the perceptions of FODEP and SACCORD staffers regarding USAID/Zambia and FES in Zambia?; What are the roles of USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia's Public Diplomacy (PD) and Smart Power (SP) towards FODEP and SACCORD?; What is the relevancy of USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia for the finances and sustainability of FODEP and SACCORD?
2. What impact, if any, do USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia have on the agenda of FODEP's and SACCORD's programs?
3. What are the opinions of FODEP and SACCORD staffers on the ways to improve the effectiveness of programs combating political violence in Zambia?

Significance of the study

This study will not only benefit USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia but also other numerous funders that will in the future join in the fight against electoral violence in Africa. The research will also benefit local NGOs that need to engage in or need to improve their efforts at combating electoral

violence; it will benefit scholars who would want to investigate other aspects such as the psychological well-being of harassed victims or the long-term effects. This observation is well articulated by Cyllah who argues that ‘preventing electoral violence does not begin or end on Election Day; it requires a phased, continual engagement’.¹⁰

Public Democracy and Smart Power

Melissen stresses that public diplomacy is part and parcel of world politics:

*(...) NGOs and other non-state actors seek to project their message in the pursuit of policy goals. Image creation and management is a key resource and one where non-state actors may have an advantage, helping to explain why the more traditional, hierarchical concept of strategic public diplomacy often fails to achieve its goals.*¹¹

This definition, registers clearly the importance of NGOs in the deployment of public diplomacy. The model of public diplomacy that is practiced between the interaction of USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia with local NGOs FODEP and SACCORD is the network model. This model encourages building networks by means of international dialogue; these can be in the form of partnering with other organizations to fund and host conferences, seminars, programs, and training activities for specific causes.

¹⁰ Almami Cyllah (ed.), *Elections worth dying for? A selection of case studies from Africa: IFES case studies*, Washington DC, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2014, pp. 2 - 3.

¹¹ Jan Melissen, *The new public diplomacy: soft power in international relations*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 41.

The network model also requires investing in communication research, which in turn enables well-strategized and tailor-made approaches which yield successful engagements with global partners.¹²

The concept of Smart Power was used in the study because local Zambian NGOs do not only operate on soft power influenced by funders / partners but also by financial assistance in the form of aid or grants (money). Smart Power (SP) involves the use of soft power and hard power in order to achieve effective results in varying interactions; soft power influences by means of ideas, policies, philosophies and ideals whereas hard power utilizes military or economic strategy to get things done. By eliciting and supporting NGO programs that champion democracy and promote human rights, USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia have set stage on what their preferences are. In short, the two entities fund programs and activities they deem important; local NGOs on the other side, have to get in line with these programs if they wish to coordinate with Western funders. Nye's definition of soft power argues that soft power is 'the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment'.¹³ Monetary clout gives hard power an upper hand as a means of strength and this is captured when Gallarotti argues that hard power relies on tangible power resources comprising of economic means or armed forces. Hard power therefore in this

¹² Jamie Metzl, "Network diplomacy", *Carnegie Endowment International Peace*, 1 April 2001, available at <http://carnegieendowment.org/2001/04/01/network-diplomacy-pub-681>, accessed on 9 June 2017.

¹³ Joseph S. Nye, *Soft power: The means to success in world politics*, New York, Public Affairs, 2004, p. x.

study was defined according to Gallarotti's argument¹⁴ particularly with emphasis on 'economic means'. Armitage and Nye define smart power as neither hard nor soft, but as '(...) developing an integrated strategy, resource base, and tool kit to achieve American Objectives... It is an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions at all levels'.¹⁵

Investing heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions indeed does not rule out financing Zambian NGOs to achieve a funder's / partner's agenda. USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia with their use of public diplomacy and smart power have indeed entered into alliances and partnerships with FODEP and SACCORD; these NGOs are a mechanism of delivering donor's / partner's messages or principles of democracy and human rights values to the Zambian electorates through their civic and voter education programs. Nye (2008) writes that "Public Diplomacy is an important tool in the arsenal of smart power, but smart public diplomacy requires an understanding of the roles of credibility, self-criticism, and civil society in generating soft power".¹⁶

¹⁴ Giulio Gallarotti, "Soft power: What it is, its importance, and the conditions for its effective use" in: *Journal of Political Power*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2011, pp. 25 - 47.

¹⁵ Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye Jr., *CSIS Commission on Smart Power: A smarter, more secure America*, Washington DC, CSIS Press, 2007, p. 7.

¹⁶ Joseph S. Nye, "Public diplomacy and soft power", in: *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political Science and Social Science*, vol. 616, no. 1, 2008, pp. 94 - 109.

Theoretical Framework

Three sources of theoretical framework were used in this study; these are the argument of “Dead Aid: Why Aid is not working and How There is Another Way for Africa” by Dambisa Moyo (2009);¹⁷ International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) – “Elections Worth Dying For? A selection of case studies from Africa”;¹⁸ and John Keane’s Theory of the Emerging Monitory Democracy (2009).¹⁹ Moyo writes that government-to-government foreign aid has harmed Africa and should be discontinued as this is fuelling high poverty levels. She strongly disfavours systematic aid - the kind normally administered through the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other non-binding economic growth support which has not worked for Africa in over five decades.²⁰

This study dealt with the aid that is received from USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia and directly made available through partnerships to FODEP and SACCORD – the type of aid Moyo does not, to greater extent, approve of. However, to call the funding the two local NGOs receive from USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia as charity-based aid is not the right terminology; this revenue is allocated with a more stringent partner-orientated and results-based understanding. Moyo’s critical discussion on

¹⁷ Dambisa Moyo, *Dead aid: Why aid makes things worse and how there is another way for Africa*, London, Penguin Books, 2009, pp. 1-188.

¹⁸ Almami Cyllah (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 1-199.

¹⁹ John Keane, *The life and death of democracy*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2009, pp. 1-958.

²⁰ Dambisa Moyo, *Dead aid: Why aid makes things worse and how there is another way for Africa*, London, Penguin Books, 2009, p. 28.

systematic aid, however, proved relevant as many of her arguments could be applied to the type of funding channelled to the NGOs under study. This study argues that funding given by foreign donors is indeed crucial for Africa's development, democracy, human rights and basic freedoms. With the escalating levels of violence witnessed in Zambia, it is necessary that some of the funding be diverted to upholding peace by means of strategically designed programs carried out through the auspices of NGOs. After all, international NGOs and organizations cannot operate freely and effectively promote their programs if a nation is ravaged by war.

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) case studies availed rich source of information, particularly the work of Almami Cyllah and Elizabeth Côté who examined women and youth perpetrating and mitigating electoral violence in the West African countries Guinea and Sierra Leone. The IFES working in these two countries deemed electoral violence a major theme on their agendas and funded projects to get rid of it. In Guinea IFES collaborated with 50 civil society networks and organizations, working closely with youth and women.²¹ What was important to note from these experiences was how the IFES actively engaged youthful communities in mitigating electoral violence. It is interesting to note the similarities between Zambia and the two West African countries – all three have youthful populations, bountiful natural resources, and yet are hard hit with unemployment problems and high poverty levels. The youths are desperate

²¹ Elizabeth Côté, and Almami Cyllah, "Women, youth and electoral violence" in: Almami Cyllah (ed.), *Elections worth dying for? A selection of case studies from Africa: IFES case studies*, Washington DC, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, 2014, pp. 109 - 122.

and are in crisis and, as a result, prove to be easy targets for elite politicians to manipulate into violent acts around electoral periods.

Keane published in 2009 a general global history of democracy. He writes that the history of democracy has had three distinct stages of evolution being the assembly democracy, the representative democracy and an emergent form which he has named ‘monitory democracy’.²² According to him, since 1945 the world has seen the vast introduction of power-scrutinizing mechanisms; he refers to these as ‘monitory bodies’. Their purpose is to act as gate-keepers, both within a state and internationally, keeping power-holders in check outside the conventional mechanism of periodic elections and parliamentary representation.²³ Zambia has still to consolidate its representative democracy. I sought to explore what Keane says about a combination of a still weak representative democracy and an emerging network of agents of the monitory democracy. Keane also writes that monitory democracy is not a straightforward matter to comprehend and therefore many misconceptions about it exist ‘beginning with the hostile charge that monitory democracy, since it fudges with the vital role of ‘the people’ is in fact no democracy at all’.²⁴

Zambian politics is still stuck in the old ways of thinking and dealing with national politics in the rules of democratic representation. The nation is a republican democratic nation; democracy is understood as a system whereby citizens freely and fairly choose representatives by majority rule.

²² John Keane, *The life and death of democracy*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2009, pp. xv - xxiii.

²³ *Ibidem*, pp. 690 - 708.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 689.

Keane argues that democracy is no longer simply a way of handling the power of elected governments by electoral and parliamentary means. He further states that democracy is larger than a nation and its reach operates way beyond territorial states. With the emergency of monitory democracy, a whole range of monitors have taken up the business of ensuring that all matters of human concern not just politics, are handled ethically and fairly.²⁵ Keane writes that “gone are the days when democracy could be described as ‘government by the unrestricted will of the majority’”.²⁶

There is indeed a “blame game” going on between the two largest political parties in the nation as to who are the instigators and actors of violence. In December 2015, Zambia’s Republican President, Edgar Lungu, disclosed that he had received reports that the UPND party was planning to fuel violence in order to disrupt the 2016 general elections; he accused the opposition party of arming its cadres with machetes ahead of the election. President Lungu said he was running a democratic government that promoted dialogue but other citizens were abusing their rights.²⁷ Hakainde Hichilema, the UPND president, called a press conference in August 2015 in which he denounced the use of violence in politics and boldly forbade the ruling party from engaging in what he termed ‘a culture of violence and intolerance’.²⁸

²⁵ John Keane, “Monitory democracy?”, *ESRC Seminar Series Paper*, Milton Keynes, Open University, 2008, pp. 8 - 14.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 3.

²⁷ ***, “Zambia: UPND plot exposed”, *Times of Zambia*, 15 December 2015, available at <http://www.allafrica.com/stories/201512160239.html>, accessed on 17 December 2015.

²⁸ ***, “HH’s speech at UPND conference”, *Open Zambia*, 14 August 2015, available at <http://www.openzambia.com/2015/08/hhs-speech-at-upnd-conference>, accessed on 15 March 2017.

According to a Southern African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD) statement released in January 2016, the NGO's Executive Director, Boniface Cheembe, lamented that:

... The year 2015 witnessed a disturbing increase in the levels and intensity of political violence in the nation. The usage of guns became more pronounced as people were shot, injured and maimed as most stakeholders became concerned about the role of law enforcement agencies in preventing political violence... Furthermore, the year 2015 experienced some of the worst brutality witnessed by journalists, namely, the Post reporter and his Radio Feel colleague in the Eastern Province of Zambia. The humiliating reported violence of the journalists being beaten, urinated in the mouth, and almost burnt to death were disturbing and reminiscent of colonial style brutality.²⁹

The electoral violence perpetuated during the 2016 general elections intensified, while election day was quite peaceful — the campaign period followed by the post-election period bore the highest record of violence-related incidences. Various reports of people being physically beaten,³⁰ hacked with machetes or knifed, vehicles being attacked and stoned, women being stripped naked^{31 32}, property being destroyed and burnt down and the defacing of campaign bill-boards picturing the PF and UPND presidents were captured in the media. A scholar admits “both PF and UPND cadres

²⁹ ***, “2015 has been worst year for Zambia – SACCORD”, *Allafrica.com*, 1 January 2016, available at <http://www.allafrica.com/stories/201601041826.html>, accessed on 15 September 2016.

³⁰ ***, “Sukwa recounts beating ordeal by PF cadres”, *Facebook*, 7 September 2016, available at <https://www.facebook.com/postzambia/2084306701795167>, accessed on 5 August 2017.

³¹ ***, “VIDEO: Woman stripped naked by PF cadres for wearing UPND attire”, *Kitwe Times*, 23 March 2016, available at <http://www.kitwetimes.com/.../video-woman-stripped-naked-by-pf-cadres-for-wearing-upnd-attire>, accessed on 23 March 2016.

³² ***, “Zambia: PF cadres strip woman naked in Mpulungu”, *Allafrica.com*, 6 January 2016, available at <http://www.allafrica.com/stories/201601061212.html>, accessed on 5 April 2017.

perpetrated some gruesome violence in the run up to the election”.³³ In the same year, two youths were shot by the police, an incident which left a young woman dead and a young man hospitalised - this transpired when a UPND rally was abruptly cancelled by the police.³⁴ Supporters of an aspiring UPND Member of Parliament (MP) allegedly physically injured an aspiring Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) MP candidate in Namwala. These two incidences prompted the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) to suspend campaigns in Lusaka and Namwala for 10 days.

Attempts at Discussions and Internal Solutions to Political Violence

Before determining whether Zambia can look to the outside world for assistance to resolve its political violence problems, it was interesting to investigate if the two major political parties in Zambia have tried to curb violence internally and what some of the suggestions that have been tabled by various stakeholders with regard to the same are. SACCORD suggested setting up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). This suggestion came after President Lungu made his presidential inauguration speech on September 13, 2016 at Heroes Stadium in Lusaka, and announced that he would institute a commission of inquiry into the cause of the post-election

³³ Phillan Zamchiya, “Humble, mother-loving and God-fearing? How Edgar Lungu won Zambia’s presidential elections”, *African Arguments*, 16 August 2016, available at <http://africanarguments.org/2016/08/16/humble-mother-loving-and-god-fearing-how-edgar-lungu-won-zambias-presidential-elections/>, accessed on 9 September 2016.

³⁴ ***, “Police shoot dead female UPND supporter in Lusaka”, *Lusakatimes.com*, 9 July 2016, available at <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2016/07/09/police-shoot-dead-female-upnd-supporter-lusaka/>, accessed on 24 September 2016.

violence which occurred in Zambia. SACCORD argued that Zambia has in the past tried using a commission of inquiry such as the one that was used to resolve the Barotseland crisis; this, however, did not bring about trauma healing or reconciliation in the nation. A TRC approach was favoured because:

*... [it] will be victim centred and also take into consideration the needs of the perpetrators. It will help us understand the following questions: Who are the victims? Where are the victims? What is their state? Have they received any help? Why did the perpetrators do what they did to their fellow citizens? How did they feel when they injured their fellow citizen? Are they better off now after engaging in political violence?*³⁵

Despite this advice, President Lungu in October 2016 appointed a commission of inquiry in accordance with the country's Inquiries Act. The commission's mandate was to:

*...inquire into the voting patterns in the general elections conducted from 2006 to 2016 and the electoral violence that characterised the 2016 general elections, in order to come up with recommendations that will prevent the occurrence of violence in future elections and ensure that voting outcomes are reflective of the people's free will.*³⁶

Some members of the public condemned the commission as unworkable. Forum for Democracy and Development's (FDD) spokesperson

³⁵ ***, "SACCORD has taken keen note of the pronouncement by President Lungu", *Facebook*, 14 September 2016, available at <https://www.facebook.com/saccord.zm/posts/982568068518232>, accessed on 14 September 2016.

³⁶ ***, "President Lungu appoints a Commission of Inquiry to examine the causes of the political violence", *Lusakatimes.com*, 22 October 2016, available at <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2016/10/22/president-lungu-appoints-commission-inquiry-examine-causes-political-violence>, accessed on 3 January 2017.

Antonio Mwanza was reported as saying there is no need for the government to be wasting taxpayers' money when everyone knew the causes of political violence. Mwanza wondered why political parties had not been included in the process. He referred to the commission as a mere academic exercise.³⁷

Another means of curbing violence in Zambia is having political leaders constantly encouraging their own members to refrain from violent behaviour; yet another solution that can also contribute to ending political violence in Zambia rests on the country's political parties sitting down to iron out their differences through political party talks—there is need for tolerance and dialogue. The former Minister of Home Affairs Davis Mwila gave valuable advice when he stressed that the creation of peace and unity must start with political parties—then only can others emulate that and, in so doing, build Zambia's image as a peace haven.³⁸ Both the Republican President Edgar Lungu and Hichilema, the opposition president for UPND have attempted to call on the other to engage in dialogue on the subject of electoral violence. Such attempts were snubbed by one of them (or their party members), citing one reason or another. In one incident, President Lungu requested a church-mediated meeting with UPND, but Guy Scott, who was Zambia's vice-president under PF rule and, at this time, had decided to support the candidacy of opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema, was quoted

³⁷ ***, "Commission of Inquiry is a waste of time and resources; causes are well known – FDD", *Lusakatimes.com*, 22 October 2016, available at <https://lusakatimes.com/2016/10/22/commission-of-inquiry-is-a-waste-of-time-and-resources-fdd>, accessed on 3 January 2017.

³⁸ Kelvin Chongo and Doris Kasote, "Political parties to blame for violence", *Zambia Daily Mail*, 9 March 2016, available at <https://www.daily-mail.co.zm/?p=61785>, accessed on 25 March 2016.

responding to President Lungu: “This is not something that needs a workshop. It is a matter of enforcing the rule of law”.³⁹

An interparty indaba (meeting) on violence was held at the Anglican Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Lusaka on March 29, 2016, at which 18 political parties committed to end the vice using various strategies.⁴⁰ The attendees included party presidents who unanimously agreed to utilize political leadership structures to fight violence from within their own parties and also to resolve issues amongst fellow political parties. Some important issues discussed were the discouragement of wearing military regalia and the use of machetes by political party supporters, a move that would eliminate fear and intimidation in society. However, despite the successful deliberations, reports of political violence did not abate. Seven months later in October 2016, Forum for Democracy and Development’s (FDD) spokesperson Antonio Mwanza remarked on the failure of the Cathedral of the Holy Cross meeting to live up to its agreed resolutions to curb electoral violence:

*...We as leaders of political parties, President Lungu himself, President Nawakwi, President Hichilema, Presidents of all other political parties spent the whole day with leaders of the church, reverends, bishops of the Cathedral of Holy Cross discussing causes of political violence and what we ought to do to end violence. We came up with resolutions. What happened to those resolutions? Nada! They were thrown in the bin.*⁴¹

³⁹ ***, “Who’s to blame for violence?”, *Zambian Weekly*, 10 August 2016, available at <http://www.zambia-weekly.com/article/who’s-to-blame-for-violence>, accessed on 20 September 2016.

⁴⁰ Fridah Nkonde, *op. cit.*, accessed on 31 March 2016.

⁴¹ ***, “Commission of Inquiry is a waste of time and resources; causes are well known – FDD”, *Lusakatimes.com*, 22 October 2016, available at

Shortly after the 11th August 2016 general election day, post-election violence broke out in some UPND Southern Province stronghold areas; Patriotic Front Deputy spokesperson Frank Bwalya and Patriotic Front former Secretary General Davies Chama (now defence minister) held a press briefing at the PF secretariat headquarters in Lusaka on August 23, 2016 during which they announced that “President Elect Edgar Lungu will not meet opposition leader Hakainde Hichilema for peace talks... that Mr Hichilema’s call for peace is not genuine and it’s only meant for window dressing”.⁴² Hichilema was told to stop the post-election violence in his strongholds first where UPND supporters were burning down property belonging to PF sympathizers.

The signing of a peace accord is certainly another way electoral violence can be kept in check; this was tried just before the August 2016 general elections but proved to be a futile exercise. In July, the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) had organized a peace accord meeting and had presented a draft document called the ‘Pledge for Peace’. This gathering was meant to facilitate the possibility of presidential candidates making a firm commitment to end electoral violence; nine candidates participated. Only five of the participants signed it; three refused and one said he would sign later. They requested an addendum to provide for rights, sanctions, obligations and measures for the enforcement of the Accord; the addendum was promised to

<https://lusakatimes.com/2016/10/22/commission-of-inquiry-is-a-waste-of-time-and-resources-fdd>, accessed on 3 January 2017.

⁴² ***, “Lungu refuses to meet HH to talk peace, there shall be no government of national unity in Zambia”, *Lusakatimes.com*, 23 August 2016, available at <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2016/08/23/lungu-refuses-meet-hh-talk-peace-shall-no-government-national-unity-zambia>, accessed on 4 September 2016.

be circulated to all nine presidential candidates by the ECZ.⁴³ It was later amended and made available to the political parties; despite this effort, political violence did not cease.

Methods

This study used phenomenological research that is qualitative in nature. It utilized case study research design on USAID/Zambia, FES Zambia, FODEP and SACCORD. The target population comprised the members of FODEP and SACCORD; non-probability sampling was used. Primary data was gathered from local NGOs FODEP and SACCORD using semi-structured questionnaires and several follow-up interviews were carried out with some full-time employees at the NGOs. Data was also gathered from key employees of USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia by means of semi-structures interviews. Further information was sought using secondary data sources. The data was analysed using the triangulation method of analysis which involves both quantitative and qualitative means in order to produce a more credible outcome. Whilst the research was designed to be qualitative in nature, it adopted a descriptive approach. To analyse the data using quantitative analysis I utilised the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software system in order to interpret the data further through statistical operations.

⁴³ ***, "ECZ to amend Peace Accord after HH and others refused to sign it", *Lusakatimes.com*, 16 July 2016, available at <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2016/07/16/ecz-amend-peace-accord>, accessed on 18 July 2016.

Findings and discussions

One of the main findings of this study is that local NGOs FODEP and SACCORD perceive that Germany and America uphold human rights and they try to promote democratic electoral practices in Zambia. FODEP respondents think this because their NGO has received funding from American entities which were given to promote democratic processes and human rights activities. SACCORD believe that Germany and America are indeed democratic because amongst other reasons, they have funded programs related to elections with the aim of peaceful and fair outcomes. Both local NGOs also believe that Germany and America uphold human rights because organizations belonging to them speak out when democracy is under threat in Zambia.

FODEP and SACCORD believe that it is not possible for them to effectively carry out general programs on democracy and human rights issues including those aimed at minimizing electoral violence without financial assistance from international funders, of which USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia are a part. It was established that USAID had invested approximately US\$7.5 million United States dollars in political processes programming in Zambia from 2011-2016 but only one program was sponsored to target the reduction of violent political behaviour; this program was not carried out with FODEP, the NGO under study. USAID/Zambia funded the National Democratic Institute (NDI) with US\$5,225,000 United States dollars. This was used to conduct the Youth Ambassador's Program as one of multiple components of the Zambia Elections and Political Processes (ZEPP) Activity

for period 2015-2016. Of course, USAID is a larger organization, while FES Zambia is smaller in comparison; so, the one has greater financial muscle, while the other is more flexible to timely accommodate programs affecting the Zambian nation.

FODEP never applied for funding from USAID/Zambia specially for the purpose of programs aimed at eradicating political violence at elections periods caused by poor, uneducated constituents (actors) or instigators (sponsors of violence) because they believed the NGO stood better chances at winning contracts already being advertised by USAID than if they submitted their own program proposals. USAID/Zambia does accept unsolicited proposals and applications but financing is given mainly through competitive contracts. USAID/Zambia however funded two programs on democratic processes with the local NGO and these cost a total of US\$161,552 United States dollars. One of the programs was entitled “Undertaking domestic observation in Zambia’s 2015 presidential by-elections” and the second program was dubbed “Building confidence in the voter registration and voting process through youth participation”. USAID/Zambia was not FODEP’s largest donor.

FES has in its coffers 100,000 Euros (US\$117,400) dedicated to all its national projects in Zambia yearly. From 2011-2016, FES Zambia conducted 15 dialoguing programs on political violence eradication at a cost of around 45,000 Euros (US\$52,830). The Foundation normally spends 3000 Euros (US\$3,544) on a single project. FES Zambia’s funding policy is that it does not normally transfer money to a partner when agreement to carry out a specific program has been reached; it instead agrees to bear a certain aspect

of the expenses that the activity will need. In the period 2011- 2016, FES Zambia partnered with SACCORD and coordinated on 12 discussion programs aimed at reducing / eradicating violent electoral political behaviour costing 36,000 Euros (US\$42,530). The Foundation had also bought electronic office equipment and donated a vehicle to SACCORD, bringing the grand total to 54,000 Euros (US\$63,703) in five years. FES is not SACCORD's largest financial contributor. SACCORD is permitted to discuss with FES Zambia ideas of programs it would like to undertake but these must fall under the mandate of FES. One of FES Zambia's duties is to coordinate with labour unions, however, the Foundation has not yet made the effort of targeting the eradication of political violence in Zambia by collaborating with the country's various unions; it, however, dealt with political leaders and youths on the same.

Despite these efforts by the two Western entities to provide funding generally for the two local NGOs under study, both FODEP and SACCORD felt there was need for donors to fund more civic and educational programmes that address the violent behaviour during Zambia's electoral periods. FES Zambia has indeed done more programmes aimed at addressing the escalating political violence problem in Zambia compared to USAID/Zambia, but it is worth noting that despite USAID/Zambia only having funded one such program in the study's timeframe (2011 - 2016), the Agency provides much larger sums of money for sponsored programs.

The 'donor-aid-syndrome' that renders Zambian NGOs almost totally dependent on Western aid has made financial aid a relevancy in their relationship with international funders. This dependency is unhealthy and

placed FODEP and SACCORD at the mercy of donors and partners in so much that they are unable to formulate and implement programs that target electoral violence on their own, on a large scale. There is need for innovative planning to generate own funds. Research on behavioural change also needs to be carried out by both FODEP and SACCORD so that programs on peaceful conduct can be evaluated to gauge successes and failures.

Apart from leaders in higher political structures of political parties who actually instigate electoral violence, the youths who are the actors of political violence deserve increased deliberate attention when implementing programs / activities concerned with curbing election violence. Focus on youth programs should in the future target male youths living in shanty compounds and other peri-urban areas of Zambia where there is high social inequality and the standards of living are very low. Although FODEP claims that urban and rural youths form part of their target, little effort to provide programs concerning peaceful conduct at electoral periods was done in 2011 to 2016. SACCORD, on the other hand, has carried out 12 national dialoguing programs in partnership with FES Zambia in the period 2011 – 2016, which focused on democratization processes and also dealt with issues of youth and electoral violence. The Foundation and SACCORD identified youths as pawns manipulated by politicians in the game of power politics; their program outreach involved youths from political parties, churches and civil society.

FODEP and SACCORD have plenty of suggestions on how future collaborations between their NGOs and USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia can be tremendously improved in order for the local NGOs to effectively deliver

programs, and also the best way the Western organisations can assist the NGOs in financing issues. The biggest need was that of more funding, which appear to be the cry of local NGOs in third world nations. However, it is important that Western donors and partners allow more project proposals by FODEP and SACCORD to be submitted for consideration as projects to be undertaken. USAID's bureaucratic nature was also mentioned as a snag in working with the Agency; the process of acquiring funding quite challenging and not straight forward. FES Zambia on the other hand was found more flexible but only works with its partners and its budgets is limited in comparison to USAID.

Conclusions and recommendations

Political violence is alive and well in Zambia during electoral periods; it has been there for more than five decades. It has been passed on from one presidential era to another and its "weapon" of choice is mostly impoverished, unemployed and uneducated male youth from peri-urban areas known as compounds. These actors, hired by influential politicians, are becoming more daring and lethal, capable of inflicting pain on victims or causing death. As more citizens are faced with electoral intimidation, fear sets in. Most of the nation's presidents have been vocal in denouncing the vice in one way or another; however, a firm hand is required by allowing the rule of law to take its course.

In present day Zambia, the Patriotic Front (PF) and the United Party for National Development (UPND) need to seriously find ways to curb

violence. Attempts at dialogue have so far indeed proved futile because Zambia's political leaders have chosen to "close their doors" and find one excuse after another why they cannot convene and analyse together what fuels mostly pre-election and post-election violence and, when they do convene, resolutions are not converted into actions. Zambia can revert to its past-praised image of a non-violent nation if its head of state, who is also the commander-in-chief, adopts a zero tolerance to political violence for all countrymen and women. More definitely has to be done in the quest of eradicating political violence in Zambia. Besides international organisations like USAID/Zambia and FES Zambia, it is up to Zambian citizens, NGOs and especially political parties and public institutions to act in order to punish instigators and perpetrators and to provide rewards for political actors who cooperate in establishing a violence-free political scene in Zambia.

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